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ABSTRACT

Concordia Teachers College recognizes the need for creating a humane and developmental environment for student living. In an attempt to achieve this objective, a student paraprofessional housing program has been designed and implemented. Initially, this involved the removal of all professionally trained personnel in the student living units. Secondly, a sophisticated selection and training model was developed and designed to utilize students to replace the professional personnel in the student living units. As a result of this program, 45 to 50 students are trained each year in the skills of interpersonal communication, problem solving, goal development, and people management. While the paraprofessional utilizes these skills in the student living units, all students have an opportunity to observe the applicability of these skills in people-to-people types of environments. The evaluation process has indicated a strong degree of success with almost all students viewing the trained paraprofessional as a highly skilled person. In addition, graduate study surveys indicate that the paraprofessional program has added a valuable dimension to the overall teacher education program. (Author)

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Name of Program: STUDENT PARAPROFESSIONAL HOUSING PROGRAM

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Seward, Nebraska

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SUMMARY

Concordia Teachers College recognizes the need for creating a humane and developmental environment for student living. In an attempt to achieve this objective, a student paraprofessional program has been designed and implemented.

Initially, this involved the removal of all professionally trained personnel in the student living units. Secondly, a sophisticated selection and training model was developed and designed to utilize students to replace the professional personnel in the student living units.

As a result of this program, 45 to 50 students are trained each year in the skills of interpersonal communication, problem solving, goal development, and people management. While the paraprofessional utilizes these skills in the student living units, all students have an opportunity to observe the applicability of these skills in people to people types of environments.

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SP009 807

STUDENT PARAPROFESSIONAL HOUSING PROGRAM

FOR STUDENT LIVING

Submitted to

Distinguished Achievement Award Committee
of
American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education

From

Concordia Teachers College
Seward, Nebraska

W. Th. Janzow, President

Martin B. Kirch, Academic Dean
Erich E. Helge, Dean of Students

PROPOSAL FOR PROGRAM ENTRY FOR 1976 AACTE DISTINGUISHED ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

DESCRIPTION AND DEVELOPMENT

From the fall of 1968 up to the present there has been a gradual but progressive change in the role that students are asked to assume in relation to their peers and the living environment at Concordia Teachers College, Seward, Nebraska. The emphasis has shifted from that of a monitoring atmosphere to that of humanizing the student living units. Organizationally, this involved the removal of all house consellors from the living units including the restructuring of a student proctor program into a highly sophisticated student paraprofessional program. Positions of Dean of Men and Dean of Women were replaced with Directors of Student Life. The role of the Student Paraprofessional was not quickly grasped by members of the faculty and students themselves needed to make adjustments. There were some feelings of skepticism, jealousy and suspicion as a result of reducing the professional staff. As the sophistication of the Student Paraprofessional Program selection process improved and as the roles of the Student Paraprofessionals became more evident, the doubts and suspicions shifted to support and confidence. The fears that were raised by some did not materialize and the hopes and expectations gradually became reality. The living units did not go to shambles, in fact property damage decreased. The moral standards did not erode, and the over-all morale of students did increase.

Students generally demonstrated a higher level of trust and conficence and were willing to share concerns. Crisis counselling situations have declined and students attritioning without some level of interaction with Student Paraprofessional is very rare.

One yardstick for measurement is a recent survey conducted among graduates. Eighty-one point four percent of the graduates of five years ago indicated that they felt the life style on campus contributes to their total educational program. Graduates of a year ago expressed even a higher level of satisfaction.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

W. Harold Grant, from Auburn University, stated, "A residence hall environment that is dehumanizing is one that violates an individual's nature or that does not support his natural development. A residence hall environment that is humanizing is one that does respond to and support the development of a human being in a natural manner." [1]

In support of Grant's statement Concordia's Student Housing Program established the following three goals:

1. To design an environment in the student living units that is as natural and humane as possible.
2. To train and develop a housing staff that is proactive rather than reactive.
3. To develop a program with a developmental base rather than one that is regulatory in nature.

So that the above named goals could be carried out, the task was to train peer students as paraprofessionals to become skilled in:

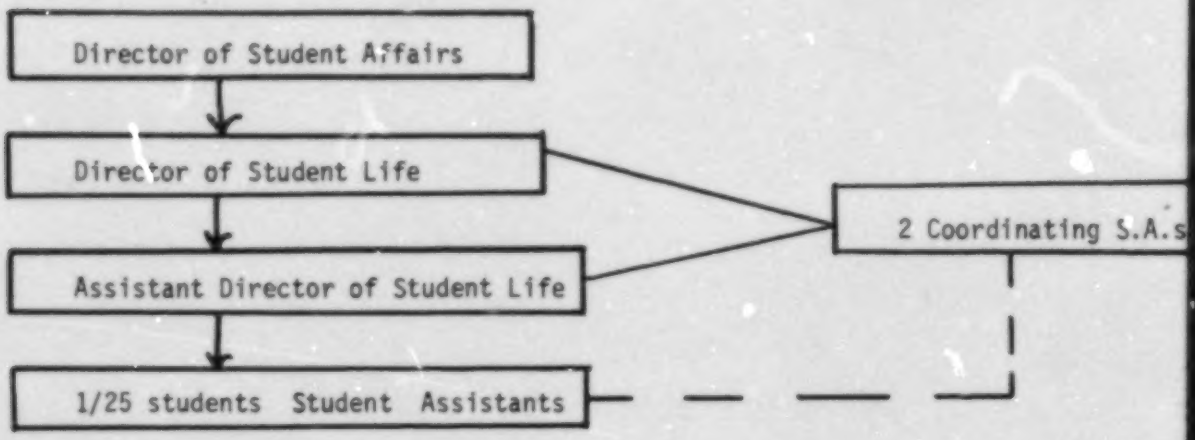
a. interpersonal communication
b. problem solving
c. goal development
d. people management

PERSONNEL INVOLVED

The major administrative official responsible for student housing on Concordia's campus is the Dean of Student Affairs. Responsibility is delegated to the Director and Assistant Director of Student Life with the responsibility of program design, program implementation and staffing.

[1] David A. DeCoster and Phyllis Mable, eds. Student Development and Education in College Residence Halls, (Washington D.C. : American College Personnel Association, 1974), p.71

The administrative structure can be represented as follows:


Director of Student Affairs
Director of Student Life
Assistant Director of Student Life
1/25 students Student Assistants
2 Coordinating S.A.s

_____ lines represent direct line of responsibility

- - - - - - - - - - - - lines represent advisory roles

BUDGET

Stipends for Student Paraprofessionals	$21,700
In-service training and program development	1,300
Materials and supplies	500
	$23,500

Student Paraprofessionals are reimbursed $50.00 per month.

Two Coordinating Student Paraprofessionals each receive $100 per month.

CONTRIBUTION TO TEACHER EDUCATION

1. In the student housing program at Concordia, between 45 and 50 students are trained to be skilled paraprofessionals under direct supervision of the Director and Assistant Director of Student Life.
2. Through the actual practice of the learned skills in training, the paraprofessionals are given the opportunity to develop expertise in their skills which will be of great benefit to them personally as they persue their teaching positions upon graduation.

As a result of the trained paraprofessionals working in the student living units, all students on campus have an opportunity to observe the practical utility of the following skills:

a. To problem solve in a systematic and structured approach with emphasis on problem development and value clarification.
b. To develop and analyze goals to enable better decision making leading toward achievement and a clearer recognition of progress and success.
c. To develop the ability to empathize with the personal feeling of others.
d. To develop skill in listening, understanding speech mannerisms and body talk.
e. To develop skill in confronting others on sensitive issues and authority problem through effective and timely interventions.
f. To develop skill in basic emergency first-aid.
g. To develop skill in promoting spiritual growth and interdependence.
h. To develop skill in understanding and clarifying job roles and responsibilities.

EVALUATION

PART I

In an attempt to evaluate the effectiveness of the training program and its impact on the student in the living units, the following instrument was developed:

	Low						High
Availability	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Consistency in actions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Sensitivity to self	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Sensitivity to others	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Awareness of what is happening on the floor	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Demonstrates leadership	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Shows concern	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Relates well to residents on the floor	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Sets Christian example	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Facilitates interaction	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Helps maintain student conduct congruent with the Christian philosophy of the institution	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Dedication to position	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Demonstrates trust	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Democratic	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

If you had a problem would you go to your S.A. for help?	__ yes	__ no	__?
Has your S.A. made an overt attempt to develop a relationship with you?	__ yes	__ no	__?
Does your S.A. deal with obvious problems on the floor?	__ yes	__ no	__?
Does your S.A. make an attempt to promote spiritual growth and development on your floor?	__ yes	__ no	__?
Does your S.A. deal objectively with situations on the floor?	__ yes	__ no	__?

The following generalizations were made from data collected by administering the instrument to all students on campus at mid terms of the first and second semesters.

1. Overall, there was a positive response to the work of the trained paraprofessionals.
2. There was a strong indication that the students in general viewed the trained paraprofessional as one who exhibits leadership, shows concern for the welfare of the student, demonstrates effective communication, facilitates interaction, helps proactively to maintain student conduct, and is skillful in problem solving.
3. Generally, the trained paraprofessionals were sought out by students for help and assistance.

PART II

In the second phase of the evaluation the interpretation of the results was given to each individual paraprofessional by the Director and Assistant Director of Student Life. As a result of the feedback process, a job development program was established conjointly with each paraprofessional to meet specific needs indicated by their evaluation results.

Because of the results of the data collected, the institution has responded in an affirmative way to support the continuation of the student housing paraprofessional program and recognized its value for prospective educators of the future.